

First Open Congress Action Plan

Argentine House of Deputies



2021-2022



DIPUTADOS
ARGENTINA

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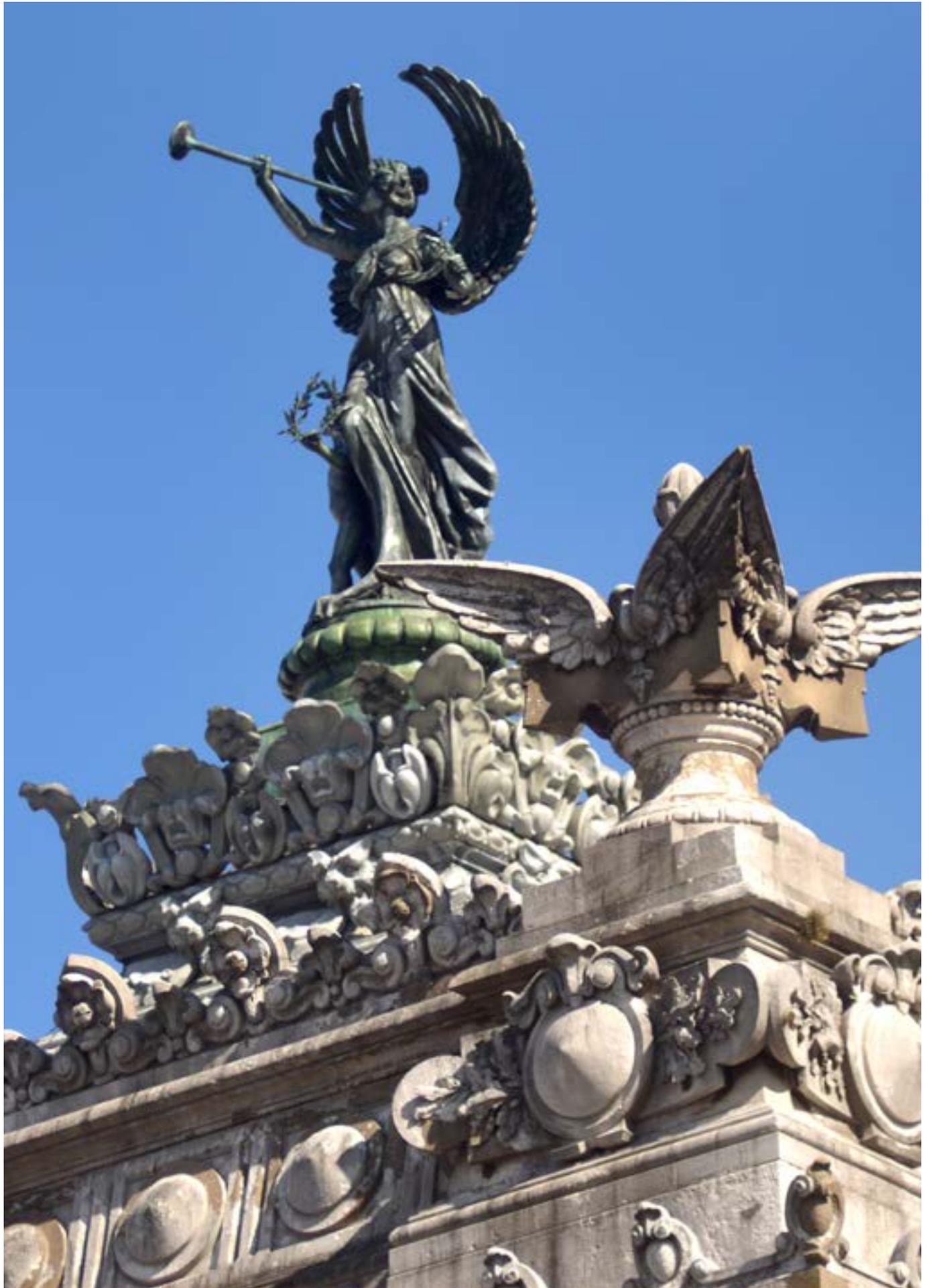
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We appreciate the collaboration of the **Translations Department, General Board of Parliamentary Information and Archives.**



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Introduction

The Argentine House of Deputies hereby presents the First Open Congress Action Plan with ambitious and measurable commitments, which shall allow us to move towards a more efficient, federal and open House.

The efforts to prepare this document were made in accordance with previous work and the initiatives already undertaken by the House with regard to openness and participation, reaffirming the political commitment to achieve, by increasing transparency and working closer to citizens, a more representative and accountable parliamentary institution open to the participation of any person willing to contribute to the legislative process.

The action plan comprises five commitments which cover a variety of topics, namely, gender and sexual diversity, document digitalization, citizen participation, access to information on committees and open agenda. They were virtually co-created by social organizations, academics, journalists, employees of this House, and deputies and their work teams, all of whom expressed their views on each topic, made

specific contributions as to the activities to be included and agreed with the areas responsible for each policy on the final scope of the commitments.

Taking into consideration the explicit request made by civil society organizations, clear and measurable progress indicators collaboratively devised have been included. This constitutes a step forward, as the implementation of the plan shall not only be assessed by the Independent Reporting Mechanism of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), but also by the local community in accordance with the established parameters and deliverables.

Although COVID-19 pandemic and the Mandatory Precautionary Social Isolation have posed a challenge for the unfolding of the collaborative process and the plan's final wording, we are pleased to finally present a document that reveals the priorities of this House, and we hope it serves as a starting point for the development and the implementation of increasingly ambitious transformative projects on openness, innovation and citizen participation.

MOVING TOWARDS AN OPEN HOUSE

Over the years, the Argentine House of Deputies has introduced different measures aimed at increasing the transparency of its actions, adopting innovative practices to improve its internal functioning and its relation with citizens, and promoting participatory mechanisms to enable the opinions of organizations, social groups, companies, researchers and/or concerned individuals reach the parliamentary process. In 2016 the Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening

Program was created to assess the Speaker of the House on the topic. The program not only constitutes the main body in charge of organizing information and making it available on the website of the House for citizen consultation, but has also taken the lead in conceiving innovative projects and activities concerning parliamentary work.

On the same year, the Open Parliament Network was created to develop bonds with civil society organizations specialized in parliamentary monitoring. This network is intended to function as an anchorage for the joint formulation of parliamentary openness policies, the identification of priorities and the orderly channeling of citizens' complaints on institutional strengthening and access to information.

The **Open Parliament Network** is the main governance body through which the Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board coordinates openness and citizen participation policies carried out by the Argentine House of Deputies. It has proven key to the preparation and design of this action plan, by having regular calls, responding to specific questions, taking part in joint activities and helping to reach consensus over future courses of action.

It is currently composed by the following organizations: Directorio Legislativo Foundation, Democracia en Red, Poder Ciudadano Foundation, Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), Civil Association for Equality and Justice (ACIJ), Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina (OKFNAR) and Association for Civil Rights (ADC).

TRANSPARENCY EFFORTS

As a result of the collaborative work carried out with social organizations (and responding to citizen demands), the [transparency section](#), including key information about the legislative administration, was made available on the website of the Argentine House of Deputies in 2017. Thus, details about grants and subsidies awarded by deputies, wages and mobility premiums, contracts and tenders, the staff list, the trips made by legislators to their provinces, and budgetary execution were included.

Given the positive internal and external response to the publication of legislative information, the Argentine Congress introduced its first commitment in the [Third Open Government Action Plan](#), led by the Open Government National Board within the Argentine Executive Branch. Thereby, the House of Deputies and the Senate committed to publishing parliamentary and administrative information using open formats to “facilitate reuse and redistribution in internal and external services to raise public awareness on parliamentary and administrative work.” Consequently, in 2018, the House of Deputies launched the [Open Data Portal](#), providing information on legislators, committees, parliamentary blocs, budget, domestic and international trips, sittings and votes, among others.

The creation and launching of the portal allowed the initiation of internal conversations with different areas of the House not yet familiarized with the concept of ‘open data,’ to achieve a double purpose: on the one hand, to improve the internal handling of information and to have quality data available to make better decisions; and, on the other hand, to collaborate with those areas for the creation of data sets, which could be made available for public consultation in reusable and interoperable formats.



At present, the portal comprises 29 data sets and 11 data categories with information about administrative and parliamentary functioning, and constitutes the most important medium for the publication of information available to public consultation.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In 2018, the Argentine House of Deputies started the process of creating a digital platform where deputies could make their bills (both drafts and those already formally introduced) available to citizens. The purpose of this platform is to serve as the setting of digital participation, where concerned individuals or organizations can support bills and make their contributions on specific sections to improve the legislation under consideration.

The Open Legislation Portal jointly built with the organization Democracia en Red and launched in 2019 has been praised and has aroused the interest of international organizations (such as the National Democratic Institute, Hanns Seidel Foundation and global Inter-Parliamentary Union) and other congresses in our region (such as those of Peru and Brazil).

The platform, which is also key to the commitment on citizen participation introduced by this action plan—serving as an additional mechanism available that links citizens and their representatives in a direct and federal manner—, is being updated and shall be relaunched on April/May 2021.





2020 virtual sittings.

FIRST OPEN CONGRESS ACTION PLAN

After having a positive experience with the implementation of a commitment included in the Third National Action Plan on open data, the Argentine House of Deputies decided to introduce a new commitment in the Fourth Open Government National Action Plan (2019-2022). On this occasion, the House established the goal of creating a specific action plan for an Open Congress, in line with international standards and the effort made by other parliaments worldwide.

The commitment was presented in August 2019 and, together with the organizations belonging to the Open Parliament Network, a methodological document was prepared, describing the stages prior to the co-creation process.

Between September and October of that year, several conversations were held and internal awareness was raised in connection with the concept of 'open parliament,' the necessary actions for the co-creation of commitments and some guidelines for their implementation and monitoring.

To ratify the commitment and the will of moving towards an Open Congress, in December 2019, both legislative Houses issued a joint resolution through which the Open Parliament policy was institutionalized, strict deadlines were imposed for the co-creation process, and the need of broad and federal participation was expressed.



ADAPTING TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

COVID-19 pandemic brought about profound changes not only in the social sphere, but also in cultural, economic and political structures. These changes have distinctive characteristics which can be observed and analyzed, but which are also under constant reshaping.

In this sense and with the purpose of safeguarding health and complying with distancing and precautionary measures, technology tools have gained great significance in the adaptation of the functioning of different organizations and institutions.

So much so that the Argentine House of Deputies has taken several measures to guarantee legislative work in this extraordinary situation, including the design of a special protocol and the use of platforms and systems to enable the correct development of sittings and committee meetings, and the compliance with administrative and parliamentary formalities.

This setting boosted the process of modernization, which was already being carried out in the Argentine Congress, altering project plans and deadlines, but also widening their scope and raising the possibility of carrying them out with general approval.

Reaching political agreement and consensus was of paramount importance to meet this purpose as they marked the starting point for the consolidation of new adaptation mechanisms in parliamentary work. Through the Modernization Committee, the Virtual Congress Protocol was created, which was later on unanimously approved by the Regulations, Powers and Petitions Committee, and finally passed with 248 votes in favor and 2 against in the sitting held on 13 May 2020.

This led to the celebration of the first sitting mixing virtual and in-person modalities—114 years after the first sitting held on the Congress premises—, with the virtual participation of over 150 deputies.

Virtual Congress

As part of a Congress that remained active throughout the pandemic and that is prepared for what democracy entails in the 21st century, the following measures were introduced:

**Information updated on 1 March 2021.*

- > Recording the digital signatures of over **230 deputies**.
- > Training **legislators and their teams** for the use of the necessary tools.
- > Development of the **official virtual participation application** for sittings and committee meetings with identity certification provided by the National Registry of Individuals.

20 mixed sittings

(with both virtual and in-person participants).

203 hours of debate and 84 bills passed using the voting system.

The first mixed Joint Session:

President Alberto Fernández opened the 139th ordinary session. Jointly with the Senate's team, the virtual participation system was adapted for Executive Branch officials, members of the Supreme Court of Justice, provincial governors, and legislators to be able to participate in the sitting without neglecting safety measures.

- > New modality for bills to be introduced by deputies **from any place in the country** and received in digital format.

1974 bills
2208 draft resolutions
1089 draft declarations
have been introduced so far.

- > Adaptation of the mechanism for the effective development of **virtual** committee meetings:

293 meetings.
564 hours of dialogue and debate.
146 participants belonging to the Argentine Executive Branch and other bodies and institutions.

Regardless of how dramatically priorities and deadlines have changed in this context, the House has managed to honor its commitment to Open Parliament principles during the entire process. Thus, the guidelines of the institution were followed and the necessary mechanisms to attain an effective virtual co-creation process were implemented.

In early 2020, the Open Government Partnership allowed governments and parliaments to extend their action plans for one year if needed, given the health emergency and the resultant budget reallocation.

In Argentina, the Multi-Stakeholder Forum under the Executive Branch decided to extend Argentina's Fourth National Action Plan for one year, until 31 August 2022.

Therefore, after consulting with the organizations that participated in the 2019 co-creation process, the House also decided to extend its commitments and set to work on the virtual co-creation and implementation of an 18-month Open Congress Action Plan. This not only allowed to make use of the existing virtual working platforms, but also to increase federal participation of both citizens and organizations from the provinces.

In addition, the deadline extension stimulated the co-creation of more ambitious commitments as more time was allowed to undertake and carry out activities that would lead to more profound transformations.



METHODOLOGICAL PROCESS

Once the Argentine House of Deputies decided to hold mixed sittings (with both virtual and in-person participants), the Modernization Board worked jointly with the Open Parliament Network to re-adapt the methodological document to the new deadlines and the virtual co-creation modality. Taking into consideration the [Open Government Partnership's guidelines for virtual co-creation](#), a staged methodology with clearly-identifiable responsible officials was devised for the formulation of an action plan during the second semester of 2020:

- **Stage 0: Preparation.** Follow-up of the raising-awareness program started in 2019, revising contents and holding conversations with the new authorities (in office since December 2019).

- **Stage 1: Reception of proposals.** Release of the online virtual form through which concerned individuals or organizations throughout the country could send their commitment proposals to be included in the plan.

- **Stage 2: Co-creation process.** Celebration of virtual co-creation meetings with those interested on each relevant topic.

- **Stage 3: Public consultation.** Publication of commitment drafts for concerned citizens and organizations to be able to make their contributions and suggestions to improve co-created commitments.

- **Stage 4: Action Plan launch.** Delivery of the final document to the Multi-Stakeholder Forum and the celebration of a public event to present the established commitments, activities and deadlines.

- **Stage 5: Implementation and monitoring.** Implementation of the commitments between March 2021 and July 2022 (17 months), and development of a monitoring mechanism to track commitments' progress.



STAGE 0

PREPARATION

The adaptation of methodology to virtual co-creation required working jointly with different areas of the House and the Open Parliament Network member organizations to guarantee the transparent and inclusive nature of the process.

The Modernization Board held bilateral meetings were held with the General Secretariat, IT Systems General Board, Bills Reception Desk, Committees Board, HHRR General Board, Gender and Sexual Diversity Department and Equality General Board, in which they were introduced to the project; priority projects, interests and aims for the following two years were assessed; and the possibility of adding a commitment related to their fields was explored.

Later on, two multi-stakeholder meetings were celebrated. In the first one, the Speaker of the Argentine House of Deputies, Sergio Massa, ratified the political will to move forward with the action plan and talked with the organizations belonging to the Open Parliament Network about their requests, challenges and priorities. Deputies Dolores Martínez and Daniela Vilar (in-person attendants) and Claudia Bernazza, Germán Martínez and Flavia Morales (virtual attendants) took part in the second meeting. The participation of these legislators, who represent the provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fe and Misiones, and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, reinforced the will of the House to develop a diverse and federal action plan.



STAGE 1

RECEPTION OF PROPOSALS

An online form was made available for individuals and organizations throughout the country to be able to send their commitment proposals, clearly identifying the issues to be addressed and potential objectives. The form was shared with organizations and individuals concerned on topics related to open government, those participating in the community headed by the Executive Branch, previous acquaintances of the Modernization Board and those suggested by the deputies' work teams.

Following the adopted methodology, the proposals received were individually analyzed according to these criteria:

- Relevance in connection to openness, parliamentary innovation and Open Government principles.
- Argentine House of Deputies' priorities.
- Likelihood of being implemented in the following 18 months, given the technical resources and abilities of the implementing areas.

Proposals on similar issues were grouped together, while those whose implementation was found implausible were discarded. Out of the 61 received proposals, 44 were grouped according to their topic and implementing area to be reviewed by the Open Parliament Network.

Later on, using an online form, the organizations of Open Parliament Network and the Modernization Board voted for up to 5 potential commitments they found interesting.

The top ranked were discussed in the virtual co-creation meetings.

Thus, five topics were jointly identified which were dealt with in co-creation meetings:

- **Gender and sexual diversity.**
- **Digitalization of legislative documents.**
- **Citizen participation.**
- **Access to information on parliamentary committees.**
- **Open agenda.**



61

**SUBMITTED
PROPOSALS**

SENT FROM THE AUTONOMOUS CITY OF BUENOS AIRES AND THE PROVINCES OF BUENOS AIRES, ENTRE RÍOS, SANTA FE AND MENDOZA.

INTRODUCED BY DEPUTIES, MEMBERS OF THE ARGENTINE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.

OGP PRINCIPLES: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

Citizen participation **44.0 %**

Transparency **42.4 %**

Accountability **13.6 %**

STAGE 2

CO-CREATION PROCESS

Once the top five priority topics were identified, the Modernization Board contacted the areas responsible for those policies within the House for the discussion of potential commitments and assess their will to implement one of those within their scope.

Any person or institution willing to participate in any of the co-creation meetings had the possibility of enrolling by filling an enrolment form. In addition, a support document with information on the proposals received in the previous stage was made available for participants to be acquainted beforehand with the issue to be addressed and the possible solution proposed. This enabled participants to enter meetings having contextual information and a shared baseline that would balance their expectations and define the scope of the debate.

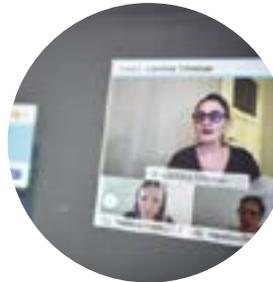
On 1 and 2 December 2020, five virtual co-creation meetings were held using Cisco Webex platform (the official system used by the House) with over 100 participants, including the authorities of the Argentine House of Deputies, deputies and organizations and citizens from all around the country.



+100
participants



68% 32%
women men

10 hours
of debate



Participants from
**Rosario, Córdoba,
Santa Cruz, Santiago
del Estero, CABA,
y provincia de
Buenos Aires.**

All meetings followed the same structure: The Modernization Board acted as moderator, and the online tool Jamboard was used to share live notes on the topics dealt with and the agreements reached.

Once synchronic meetings ended, online records were shared with all the participants and a period of 15 days was established to provide feedback and make contributions, which were later taken into consideration in the formal wording of the commitments.

On January 2021, each commitment was drafted following the OGP template and shared with the implementing areas to validate their scope and timeframe.

[ACCESS THE RECORDS/DOCUMENTS OF
THE VIRTUAL CO-CREATION MEETINGS](#)

Institutions that participated in the formulation of the plan

Civil society organizations and groups: Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), Huésped Foundation, Democracia en Red, Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina, Directorio Legislativo, Poder Ciudadano Foundation, National Board for Equality, Argentine Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (FALGBT), La Fulana organization, Casa Trans, ATTA association, Vivihs association, National University of Córdoba, National University of San Martín, Datos Concepción, Asuntos del Sur organization, Educar 2050 association, National Technological University, Escuela de Fiscales, Acción Colectiva, SUR Argentina Foundation, Civil Association for Equality and Justice (ACIJ), National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), National Democratic Institute..

Areas within the Argentine House of Deputies: Committees Board, IT Systems General Board, Equality General Board and Gender and Sexual Diversity Department, Joint Standing Committee on Supervision and Monitoring of the Argentine Office of the Public Prosecutor, Official Relations Board, Congress Budget Office, Transparency and Public Information Access Office.

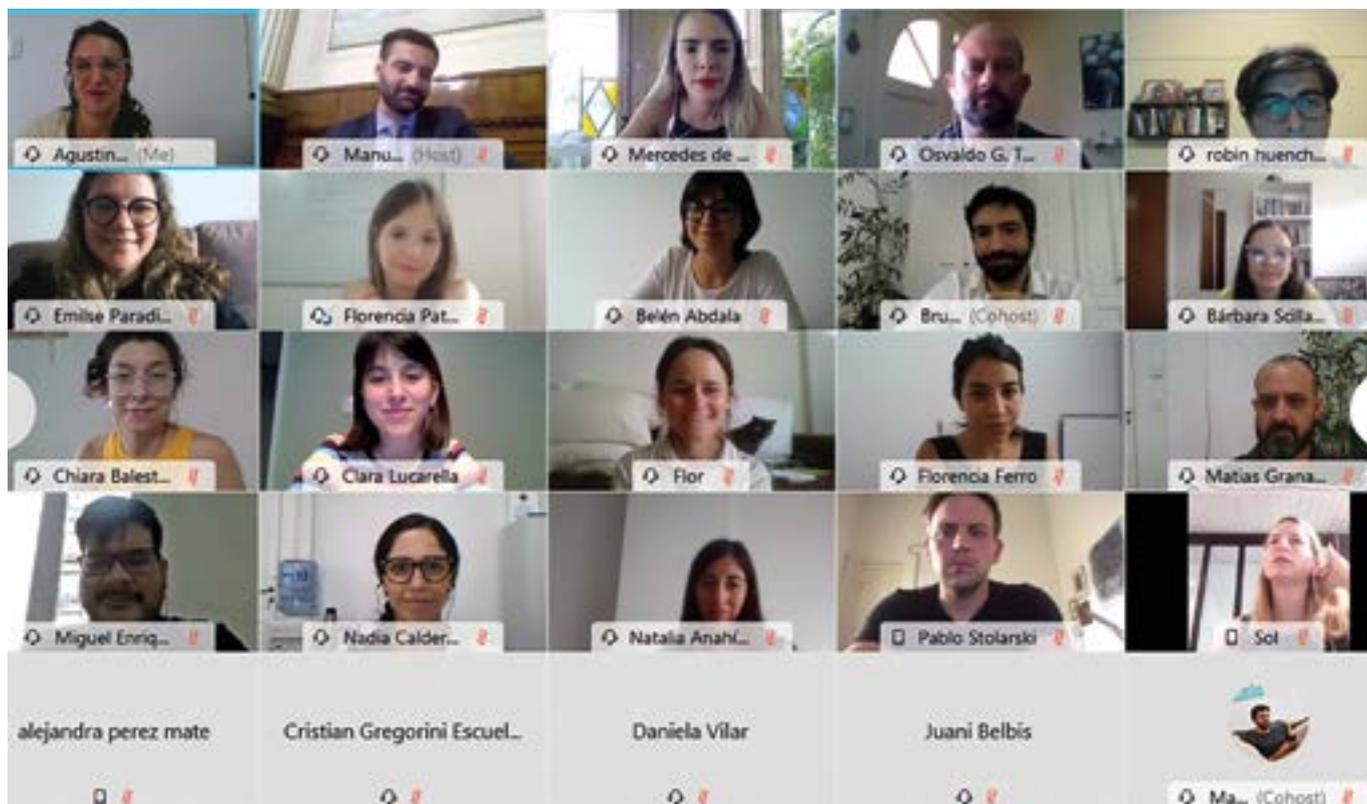
STAGE 3

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

As defined by the agreed methodology, once commitments were drafted following the OGP template and prior to their publication for citizen consultation, draft documents were shared with the Open Parliament Network for feedback. On this stage, valuable contributions were made as to the specification of certain deliverables, the identification of more ambitious progress indicators, activities specifically focused on legislators and the need to use inclusive non-sexist language throughout the plan, among others. Texts were modified taking into consideration both written suggestions and those made on a coordination online meeting.

Later, commitments were shared for public consultation through the Open Legislation Portal for two weeks. All suggestions were addressed through the website and included, when possible, in the final draft of the commitments.

42 suggestions and **115** endorsements



STAGE 4

ACTION PLAN LAUNCH

The full implementation of this plan starts in March 2021. A virtual public launch shall be conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The document shall be available thereafter on the different digital platforms of the Argentine House of Deputies to be consulted and publicly shared.

STAGE 5

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The plan shall be implemented between March 2021 and July 2022 (included).

Once the plan has been launched, the Modernization Board, jointly with the Open Parliament Network, shall design a monitoring system through which the areas of the House responsible for the commitments shall be able to share the activities undertaken and the support documents (photos, videos, minutes, reports, spreadsheets, etc.) that enable the visibility of the commitments' progress and their monitoring. This platform shall be public and easily accessible on the Argentine House of Deputies webpage.

The Argentine House of Deputies is an institution committed to gender equality and respect for sexual diversity. Therefore, this Open Congress Action Plan has been written using inclusive non-sexist language, avoiding those words that imply a view of the masculine as universal and the binary (man-woman) model as the only possibility.

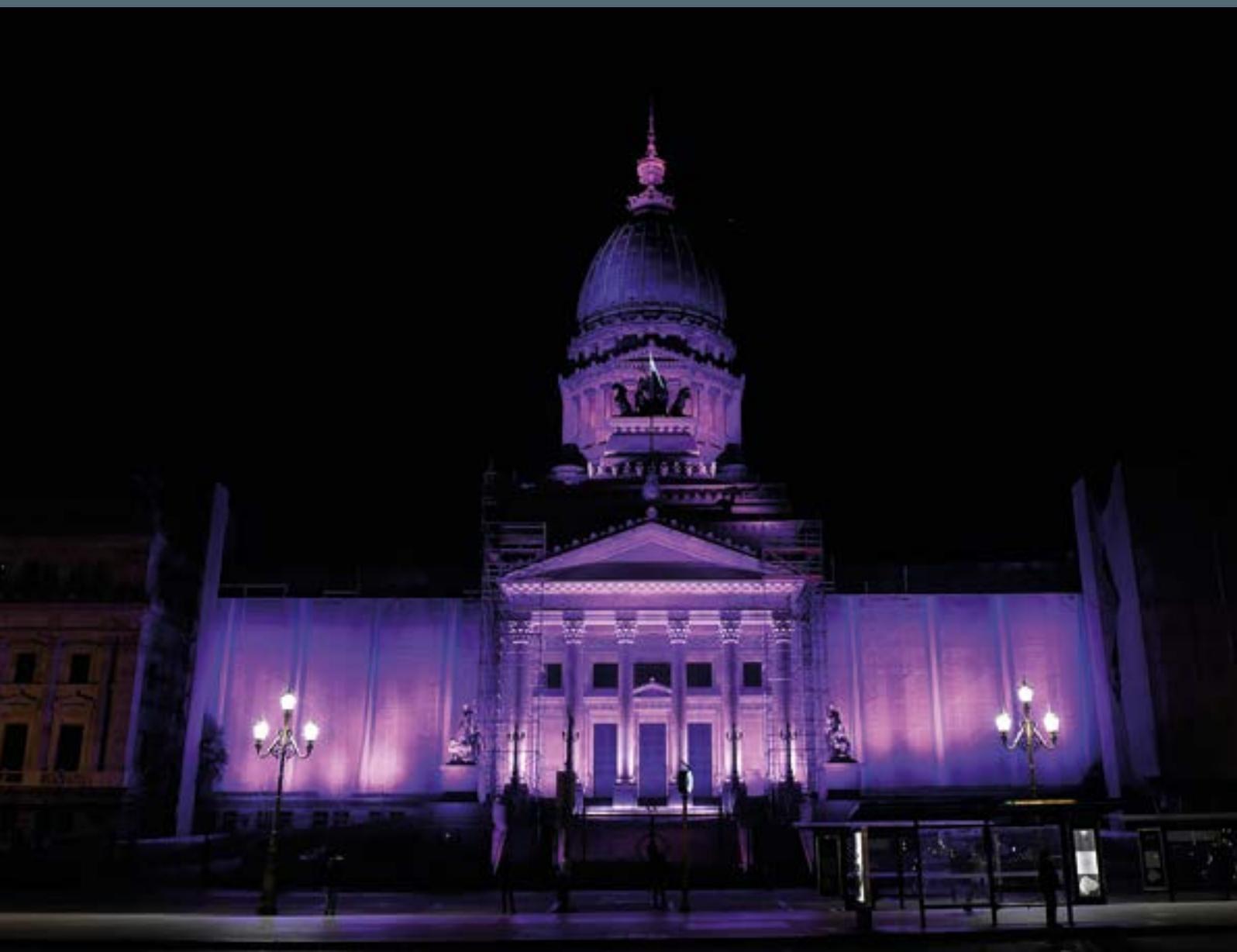
In addition, we are committed to performing affirmative action actively promoting the plural and federal participation of women, lesbians, trans, travesties and non-binary people around the country. Thus, we shall record and publish information and progress indicators in a disaggregated manner to account for this participation.

COMMITMENTS 2021-2022



COMMITMENT N° 1

GENDER EQUALITY AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY IN THE ARGENTINE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES



COMMITMENT N° 1

GENDER EQUALITY AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY IN THE ARGENTINE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES

1 March 2021 – 31 August 2022

Implementing areas.

- General Board on Equality.
 - Gender and Sexual Diversity Department.
 - Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board.
-

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION

What is the problem that the commitment will address?

Throughout history, the House of Deputies has been the driving force for broadening the rights of women, lesbians, transvestites and transgender and non-binary people. Since Act 13010 on political rights was passed and until the recent introduction of Act 27610 of Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy, an up-to-date regulatory framework, reflecting social struggles and demands, has been attained both at the domestic and the international levels. However, it is still necessary to keep on working for the full implementation of rights that are already written down in laws.

The “Towards parity. Political representation and legislative administration” report produced by the Gender and Parliamentary Equity Observatory of the General Board on Equality of the House, which raises awareness on the enforcement of Act 27412 of Gender Parity in Political Representation, shows that, out of 257 deputies, before the general election held in October 2019, the body was formed by 100 women deputies and 157 men deputies. After the elections, that representation grew to 110 (42.8%) women deputies and 147 (57.2%) men deputies. Thus, to achieve parity there is still a 7.2% of women deputies missing (updated in May 2020).

In addition, the report reveals that a woman has never chaired the Argentine House of Deputies since it was created in 1853. The first woman Deputy Speaker was Delia Delfina Degliuomini de Parodi, who occupied the position of First Deputy Speaker in 1953. Then, it was not until 1997 that the body had another woman authority as Graciela Castagnola de Fernández Meijide was Third Deputy Speaker, elected by her peers that year. Between 2004 and 2017, a woman has always been elected for one of the three Deputy Speaker positions. However, since 2018 until the present, no women have been appointed authorities of the House.

Currently, out of 19 political blocs only three single-member blocs are presided by women, while majority political blocs—which comprise 90% of deputies—are presided by men. As to parliamentary committees, out of the current 46 committees, 19 are chaired by women (41.3%), while the other 27 are chaired by men (58.7%). In addition to the historical veiling of the inclusion of femininities in the legislative work and their contributions, high inequality in the masculinization of power positions can also be identified in relation to the House’s staff.

The areas of the House devoted to gender equality are working on the project “Femininities in the Argentine House of Deputies: learning history to change it,” which is aimed at gathering information on the historical incorporation of women, lesbians, transvestites and transgender and non-binary people in the House.

Another important policy was implemented on 26 August 2020, when the House created the Employment, Training and Development Program for Transvestites and Transgender individuals through Speaker’s resolution N° 1098/20, acknowledging “social transvestitecide” and the responsibility of the State to create the necessary conditions to attain equality in terms of access to employment, education and housing. This policy was aimed at ending of the institutional violence exerted over them.

Transvestites and transgender individuals, transgender women and transgender masculinities make up the group that endures most social vulnerability, with the lowest life expectancy and the highest unemployment and informal employment rates.

In May 2012, the Argentine Congress passed Act 26743 on Gender Identity, which establishes the right to people’s gender identity, praising “the free development of everyone according to their gender identity.” It is renowned worldwide for being the first legislation of such nature. However, violence against transvestites and transgender individuals intensifies and grows considerably according to the survey conducted by the National Observatory of LGBT Hate Crimes.

The International Labour Organization (ILO), in the 2015 study “PRIDE at work. A study on discrimination at work on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity in Argentina” of 2015, defines the barriers encountered by the Transvestites and Trans community to access employment as “a waste of human talent with a detrimental effect on productivity and economic growth, whose discrimination creates socio-economic inequalities that erode social cohesion and solidarity, and hinder the reduction of poverty.”

The Latin America and the Caribbean Network of Transgender Persons (REDLACTRANS) states that, while life expectancy in Latin America is 75 years old, they only reach 35-41 years old. Finally, the Argentine Federation on Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgender Individuals (FALGBT) informs that this population is still subject to discrimination in the labor market: “the difficulties encountered to access employment, primarily in the formal sector, constitute the first obstacle faced by LGBT people; while, for those who are working, bullying, sexual harassment, unequal treatment and working conditions and job instability are some of the difficulties they frequently encounter”.

The main purpose of the State is to break through these barriers so that these citizens can fully exercise their rights. This is why both transparency and the increasingly active participation of social and political organizations are essential for the implementation of every public policy.

¹Borgogno, I. (2013), “La transfobia en América Latina y el Caribe. Un estudio en el marco de la RedLacTrans” [en línea] <http://redlactrans.org.ar/site/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/La-Transfobia-en-América-Latina-y-el-Caribe.pdf>

²FALGBT (2015): “ORGULLO (PRIDE) en el trabajo Un estudio sobre la discriminación en el trabajo por motivos de orientación sexual e identidad de género en Argentina”, Organización Internacional del Trabajo, Ginebra. [en línea] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_368648.pdf

What is the commitment?

To promote gender equality within the Argentine House of Deputies by bestowing the implementation of public policies with transparency and high-quality public information, and encouraging the participation of organizations and individuals working on gender and diversity issues in the review of public policies that affect them directly.

How will the commitment contribute to solve the problem?

On the one hand, it is expected that, by preparing public reports that account for each policy implemented and their progress, concerned individuals will have more high-quality public information to monitor how the House faces the social issue previously described.

On the other hand, an agenda identifying concrete priorities to attain greater inclusion and gender equality in the parliamentary process is expected to be established by creating favorable environments for forging regular bonds with concerned individuals, organizations and groups throughout the country, together with the authorities and the technical areas of the House.

Why is the commitment relevant in relation to the OGP values?

The commitment has a direct impact on the **citizen participation** value as it creates a formal environment of co-creation and priority identification for civil society organizations and people in general.

In addition, it produces an effect on **transparency and accountability**, given that it allows to share information on how to implement different public policies and getting feedback to improve them.

Additional information

This commitment is directly related to the Sustainable Development Goal N° 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. By promoting greater and better participation of the LGBTIQ+ group in the legislative context, gender perspective is expected to contribute to parliamentary debate as their suggestions and contributions are taken into consideration.

It is also intimately related to the other commitments included in this action plan. Promoting gender equality and diversity constitutes an institutional commitment of the House and, as such, it entails the commitment of recording and publishing

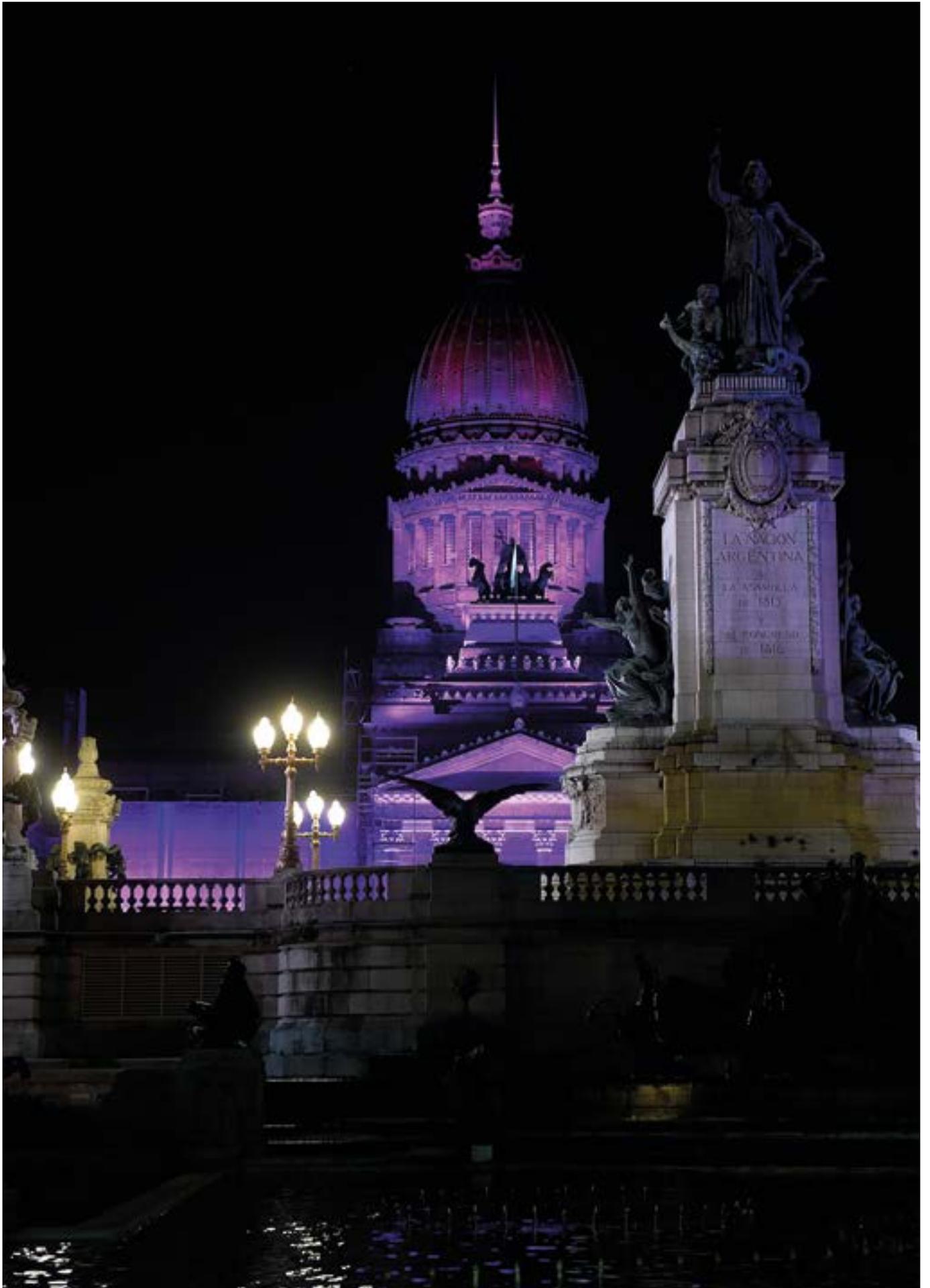
COMMITMENT N° 1 - GENDER EQUALITY AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY IN THE ARGENTINE HOUSE OF DEPUTIES

information and indicators that account for the participation of the different genders and sexual diversities in the planned activities, while taking affirmative actions to actively promote a plural and federal participation of women, lesbians, transvestites and transgender and non-binary people.

In accordance with what was discussed in the co-creation meeting, it has been decided to include specific indicators to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made as to planned activities and the scope of established goals. Thus, this commitment will include the following indicators:

- Gender indicators jointly devised are published using open formats on the House's website.
- Full implementation of the labor quota for transgender people and transvestites, and the publication of statistics showing the progress attained on the House's website.
- Recommendations to improve the implementation of policies are submitted to the authorities of the competent public agencies.





ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Drawing a map showing the work inclusion of transvestites and transgender individuals as a result of the implementation of the Employment Program within the House. An overview of the situation of these workers in the provincial legislatures will also be provided. The map will be updated every six months and information will be available in open formats.</p> <p>Deliverable: Map published on the House's website.</p>	March 2021	June 2021
<p>Holding at least two meetings between the Gender and Sexual Diversity Department and the civil society organizations and social groups concerned with the monitoring of the implementation of the labor quota for transgender people and transvestites in the House to trace progress and make recommendations if needed.</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of the celebration of meetings, and records on the contributions made and topics discussed.</p>	July 2021	December 2021
<p>Creating and regularly updating a public federal record where all the civil society organizations and social groups working on gender and sexual diversity throughout the country are registered. Any interested person or organization will be able to virtually register at any time.</p> <p>Deliverable: Public record of registered participants, disaggregated by topic of interest, area, geographic location and contact information.</p>	March 2021	May 2021
<p>Developing indicators that assess the participation of women and the different genders within the House over time.</p> <p>Deliverable: List of indicators.</p>	April 2021	July 2021

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Publishing in open formats the first assessment carried out on the basis of the identified indicators to raise awareness on the participation of women and the different genders within the House over time.</p> <p>Deliverable: Data published on the open data portal.</p>	February 2022	March 2022
<p>Holding at least three meetings with interested individuals, groups and organizations included in the public federal record, the authorities of the House and specific areas to promote gender equality in the House. In these meetings, priorities will be determined, public policies and laws whose implementation shows deficits or is not being achieved will be identified, and recommendations to increase their effectiveness will be jointly produced.</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of the celebration of open and federal meetings (lists of participants, agenda, photographs, videos, etc.).</p>	May 2021	November 2021
<p>On the basis of the work carried out in the multi-stakeholder meetings, preparing reports on the laws whose implementation shows deficits or is not being achieved, and sharing these documents with at least four authorities belonging the competent agencies.</p> <p>Deliverable: Follow-up report including recommendations for implementation improvement</p>	July 2021	December 2021

CONTACT INFORMATION

Person in charge of the implementing area: Manuel Cotado.

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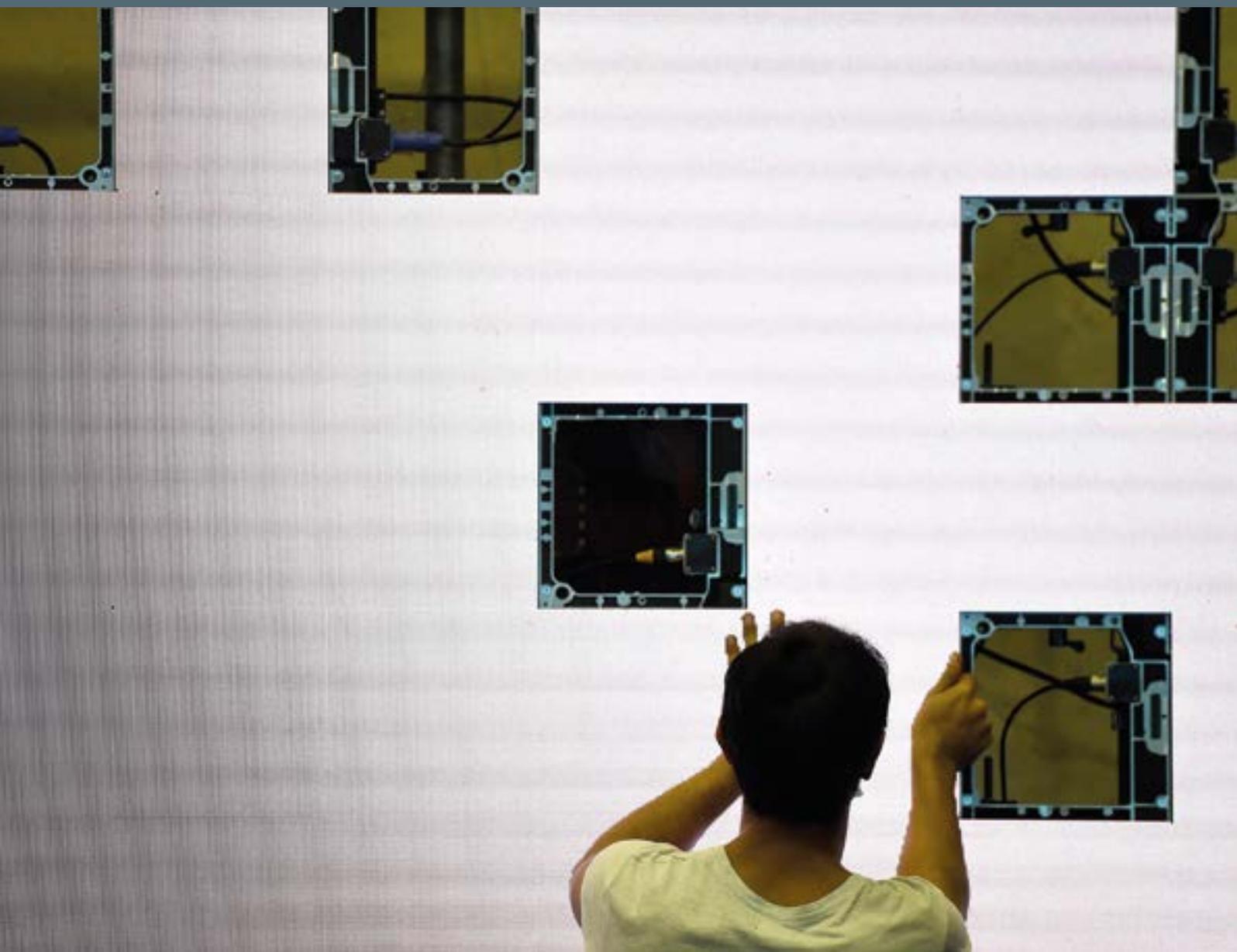
Telephone number: (+5411) 6075-7100 ext. 5089/90 and 5392.

Other participants involved: State participants. - Legislative Outreach Board on Women and Splinter Groups' Issues.
- Gender and Parliamentary Equity Observatory, Argentine House of Deputies.

Civil society organizations, private sector, multi-stakeholder organizations, work teams. - Huésped foundation
- Argentine Federation on Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgender individuals (FALGBT)
- La Fulana civil association.
- Board on Equality, FALGBT.
- Directorio Legislativo foundation.
- Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina (OKFNAR).
- Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC).

COMMITMENT N° 2

OPENNESS,
ACCESSIBILITY AND
INTEROPERABILITY
OF LEGISLATIVE
DOCUMENTS



COMMITMENT N° 2

OPENNESS, ACCESSIBILITY AND INTEROPERABILITY OF LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS

1 March 2021 – 31 August 2022

**Implementing
areas:**

- Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board.
 - IT Systems General Board.
-

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION

What is the problem that the commitment will address?

The Argentine House of Deputies is carrying out a major transformation and modernization of the procedures followed at different levels.

Currently, the Digital Parliamentary Manager is being developed aimed at redesigning flow charts of administrative and legislative texts to improve, both internally and externally, system interoperability and information accessibility.

In this context and with the purpose of attaining an integral strategy to improve efficiency and agility in parliamentary work, effort is being made to get the different relevant areas involved in the digitalization of processes and documents.

Regardless of having implemented digital signatures in 2013 in the House by Speaker's resolution N° 944/13 pursuant to Act 25506, they have been hardly put to practice until 2020, when the Social, Preventive and Mandatory Distancing started after Covid-19 pandemic was declared by WHO.

In October 2020, 80% of all deputies had their digital signatures activated, making it possible for bills, resolutions and declarations to be remotely introduced, replacing a process which previously required the author to be physically present.

In any case, digitalization involves a process that requires time and adaptation, in both technical and cultural terms. Therefore, its effective and sustainable implementation implies discussing with the different relevant areas, building consensus and providing training on the system to all the staff (including legislators, authorities and employees of the House).

In addition, there are processes which are currently in stand-by or applied ad hoc, without a reliable operative system holistically covering all the needs of each area or parliamentary process. For example, the signing of resolutions issued by the Speaker or the administration; the introduction of bills; the signing of opinion documents, rulings and agendas; the uploading of data on standing committees; the update of the open data website with administrative information, among others. The current fragmentation of all

these processes hinders their traceability, follow-up and publication for citizen consultation.

Moving forward towards the full digitalization of the administrative and parliamentary processes within the House will enable saving time and public resources by applying sustainable practices (using less paper, minimizing the need of commuting, etc.), while the House administration attains higher levels of transparency and accountability as more information will be published using better formats for citizen monitoring.

What is the commitment?

To contribute to equity, openness, accessibility and interoperability of legislative documents by applying a digitalization strategy to the different stages of the House administration for procedures to be more agile and efficient.

How will the commitment contribute to solve the problem?

Having the Digital Parliamentary Manager agreed on with the different areas and individuals involved in all the stages of the legislative process will contribute to the creation of a single system of legislative and administrative work that provides traceability to every process, increases administration transparency and offers simple and useful information.

Why is the commitment relevant in relation to the OGP values?

The commitment is relevant in relation to the OGP values as it has an impact on its three axes:

- On **transparency**, because it improves open access to the information of legislative files, increases the quality of information and provides certainties on the processes.
 - On **citizen participation**, because more opportunities for the general public to influence the decision-making process are created by increasing transparency.
 - On **accountability**, as it makes accessible and interoperable information available so that citizens can learn in detail and in due course what is debated in the different stages of the parliamentary process and the decisions made by deputies and House authorities.
-

Additional information

This commitment is directly complementary to the activities being carried out by the House on technological development, virtual paperwork and remote procedures.

In 2020, different systems within the flow chart of parliamentary areas were developed in stages. Among them, the web app for deputies to officially log in meetings through the Private Virtual Network stands out. Progress was also made by developing a virtual platform that enables committee secretaries and deputies to sign and manage virtual reports and rulings.

All these processes, which are mostly digitally handled at present, open up the possibility of accessing data originally created within the House computer system. The management of that information eases their publication and, consequently, improves citizen accessibility.

In accordance with what was discussed in the co-creation meeting, it has been decided to include specific indicators to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made as to planned activities and the scope of established goals. Thus, this commitment will include the following indicators:

- All deputies will have their signatures digitalized by the end of the commitment's implementation.
- The schedule and deadlines established in activity number 2 are met.
- At least 5 new datasets are published or updated in the Open Data Portal.

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Publishing an online form to receive internal and external input on the availability of needed information, current or demanded formats, and any other requests related to monitoring and traceability of the parliamentary process.</p> <p>Deliverable: Report establishing priorities according to the requests and needs submitted.</p>	March 2021	April 2021
<p>Drawing a timeline for the digitalization of at least five processes and the improvement of other already digitalized ones, describing in detail the activities, deadlines, intervening actors and goals based on the House's internal objectives and the submitted requests.</p> <p>Options of processes: bills reception desk, signing of opinion documents and rulings, agendas, and resolutions issued by the Speaker or the administration.</p> <p>Deliverable: Detailed timeline indicating activities, deadlines, intervening actors and goals.</p>	April 2021	June 2021
<p>Developing practical guidelines divided into modules, and training internal users to implement the system more efficiently.</p> <p>Deliverable: At least three practical guidelines.</p>	August 2021	December 2021

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Publishing information and datasets in open formats according to the external requests and the internally set priorities, increasing transparency and improving traceability of legislative work and processes (such as resolutions issued by the Speaker, administrative provisions, bills, rulings, agendas and any other pieces of information of public interest).</p> <p>Deliverable: Information published in open formats on House’s website and regularly updated (indicating the update period in each case).</p>	March 2021	July 2022
<p>Holding a meeting with civil society organizations, journalists, researchers and House employees to assess the progress attained so far and identify missing information to be made available on the House’s website.</p> <p>Deliverable: Updated timeline based on external feedback.</p>	November 2021	December 2021
<p>Holding an available data reuse meeting, to develop bonds with external actors interested in highlighting legislative information and to create interesting visual products in relation to parliamentary work.</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of the data reuse meeting.</p>	March 2022	July 2022

CONTACT INFORMATION

Person in charge of the implementing area: Manuel Cotado.

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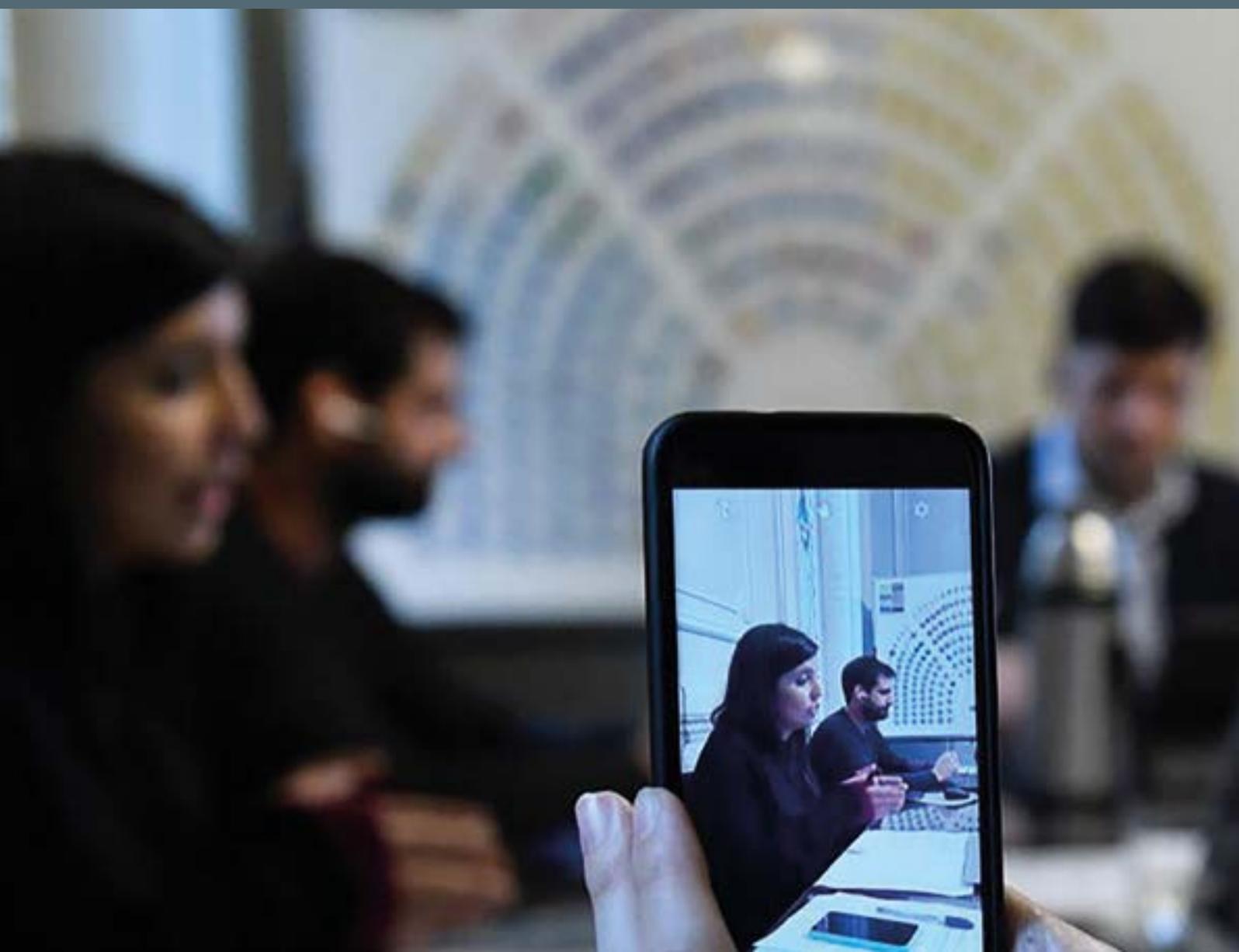
Telephone number: (+5411) 6075-7100 ext. 5089/90 and 5392.

Other participants involved:

State participants	- Transparency and Access to Public Information Office, Argentine House of Deputies.
Civil society organizations, private sector, multi-stakeholder organizations, work teams.	- Directorio Legislativo foundation. - Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC). - Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina (OKFNAR). - Open Government Partnership. - National University of Córdoba. - Datos Concepción. - National Technological University.

COMMITMENT N° 3

PROMOTION OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS



COMMITMENT N° 3

PROMOTION OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

1 March 2021 – 31 August 2022

Implementing areas:

- Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board of the Argentine House of Deputies.
 - Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress.
 - Congress Budget Office.
-

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION

What is the problem that the commitment will address?

The Argentine House of Deputies is a collective and multi-party body where deputies, who are directly elected through popular vote, represent a variety of social, economic, environmental and cultural positions.

In any case, parliamentary debate is undoubtedly favored by the participation of social groups, non-governmental leaders, civil society organizations and experts in specific thematic areas who have a thorough knowledge on the different topics under discussion or are affected by the bills that could become laws later on.

Every year, social leaders, business associations, academics, representatives of institutions and civil society organizations, who express their opinions, are welcomed at the core of parliamentary committees. In 2020, thanks to the live broadcasts of all virtual committee meetings via YouTube, not only the inclusion of 536 external participants (in 323 committee meetings) and the voicing of their points of view were possible, but also a much more federal participation was favored by virtuality, which simultaneously connects people from all around the country.

However, the presence of these external leaders in the discussions that take place in parliamentary committees, does not necessarily entail a wide and federal participation. For a person external to the House to be able to express their opinion in a committee meeting, they have to be specifically invited by a deputy and their attendance has to be approved by the chair of the relevant committee. Unfortunately, the participation of those who live far away from the city of Buenos Aires is hindered by the cost and duration of the trip and the challenges faced when trying to access information on debates. In addition, the impact that these contributions have on the legislation is unknown; we lack information on the actual changes applied to the bills as a result of the contributions made by the experts on the topics under discussion.

This issue is made more evident by the scarce participation of economically vulnerable groups facing major organization difficulties in order to be able to participate in legislative debates, that is, to physically attend committee meetings or access virtual ones, and have a significant impact on them.

Unfortunately, even though section 114bis of the internal Regulations of the House specifically rules the mechanism of public hearings as a means to make contributions to bills under discussion, this mechanism remains poorly disseminated among public officials, few resources are allocated to guarantee broad and federal participation, and hence it is rarely used.

In 2018, jointly with Democracia en Red organization, the Argentine House of Deputies created the Open Legislation Portal, a virtual platform where deputies can upload bills and draft bills for citizens to access them and make concrete contributions to the texts.

Regardless of this major initiative, which will be relaunched in the first semester of 2021, during the two years since its creation, only 12% of legislators have used the tool and there is no evidence of the incorporation of citizen contributions to the final drafting of the 51 published bills—approximately 7000 bills are introduced each year in the House.

The Congress Budget Office, a body made up of non-partisan professionals with experience on tax and budgetary matters, provides technical support to deputies and their work teams since 2019 for the assessment of the budgetary impact and viability of bills under discussion. Regardless of publishing all reports and making them available to citizens, the office currently has little opportunity to interact with the interested parties. Increasing citizen participation opportunities and the reception of requests or proposals may improve technical reports for deputies and/or the Committee on Budget and Finance of the House, not only in relation to tax matters, but also on issues related to budgetary transparency or accountability in the use of public funds.

It is important then to strengthen existing mechanisms and jointly design alternatives of citizen participation, for individuals and organizations throughout the country to learn more about the path towards legislative construction, to have better access to bills being discussed and to be able to effectively pass on their contributions to parliamentary debate.

What is the commitment?

To strengthen existing mechanisms and to create new ones to enable the increase of real citizen participation in the lawmaking process in a plural and federal manner.

How will the commitment contribute to solve the problem?

With this commitment, greater involvement of citizens in parliamentary debate will be attained, while legislators also commit to use the foreseen mechanisms to foster

plurality of voices in committees. Among other consequences, this is expected to reduce the scope of discretion of committee chairs to invite external stakeholders to participate in committee meetings.

In addition, the numerous participation instances will also tighten relations with external entities and institutions, paving the way to reach agreements, carry out joint activities and generate professional and academic discussions.

By publishing clear and accessible information, access to information will also be provided to interested parties, who will be able to make contributions effectively.

Why is the commitment relevant in relation to the OGP values?

The commitment has a direct impact on the cornerstone of the Open Government Partnership: **citizen participation**, as it foresees the creation and review of alternatives to increase plurality of voices in parliamentary debate.

It produces an indirect effect on the value of **transparency**, given that, to attain correct and effective citizen participation, access to public information on the lawmaking process, texts and topics under discussion, arguments and justifications being debated, and any other relevant information on the issues reviewed must be timely and complete.

Additional information

This commitment is directly related to Sustainable Development Goal N° 16 of “Peace, Justice and Solid Institutions,” as an increase in citizen participation in the legislative process is directly related to shaping more inclusive, diverse and fair societies.

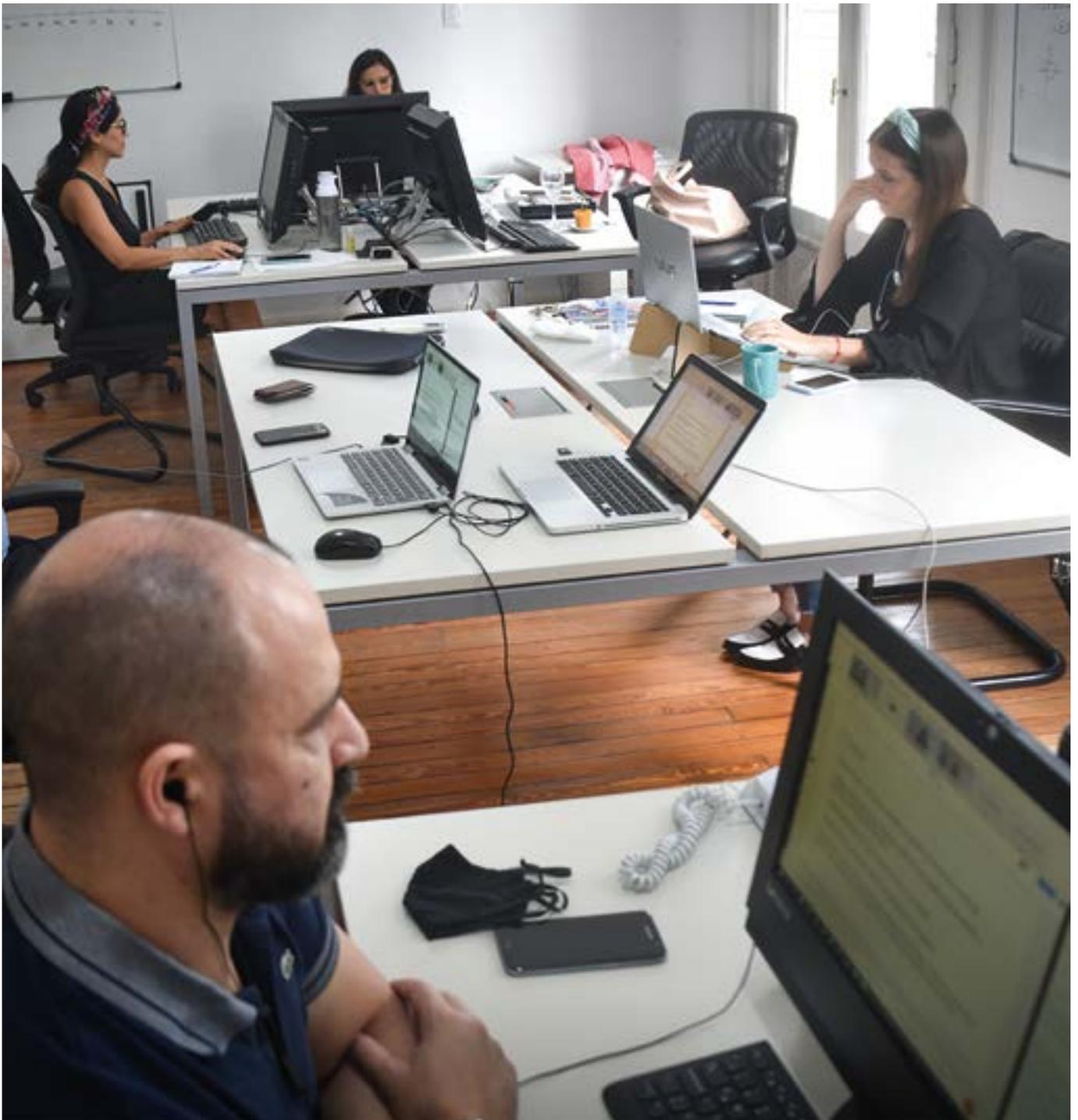
It is also related to other programs of the House, such as those carried out by the General Board on Equality and the Gender and Sexual Diversity Department, which work jointly with different groups representing women, genders and sexual diversities to expand the involvement in the bills that have a direct impact on them and to enrich all bills by adopting a gender perspective. So much so that joint work is being carried out to create citizen participation and involvement indicators to be published on the House’s website, disaggregated by gender and geographic area.

In accordance with what was discussed in the co-creation meeting, it has been decided to include specific indicators to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made as to planned activities and the scope of established goals. Thus, this commitment will include the following indicators:

- At least 30 new deputies of at least 5 different blocs upload bills or texts on the Open Legislation Portal.

COMMITMENT N° 3 - PPROMOTION OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- 100 new people are recruited to use and comment on the Open Legislation Portal.
- The Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress opens internal discussions on the received proposals related to citizen participation.



ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Creating a large and federal database of the possible external participants according to the different topics, which will be used to invite individuals and institutions to take part in debates, to share with them the bills introduced by the Open Legislation Portal and to provide them with information on the progress attained on the relevant topics. Special emphasis will be given to the inclusion of organizations, leaders and specialists on gender, diversity and gender perspective to foster their active participation.</p> <p>The database will be created by gathering existing information stored in the different areas within the House and by means of an open call for any interested individual or institution to register.</p> <p>Deliverable: Database including contact information of civil society organizations, universities, academics, unions, business associations and federations and private companies, classified according to relevant topics and geographic area of residence or place of business.</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>June 2021</p>
<p>Holding at least three meetings or forums with the participation of legislators in which experts can share mechanisms of citizen participation in the parliamentary process (theories or experiences gained by other countries or other subnational legislative bodies), whose implementation within the House can be assessed.</p> <p>Deliverable: A document including proof of the celebration of the meetings (photographs, videos, material used, etc.) and the introduced mechanisms with recommendations for their implementation in the House.</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>November 2021</p>

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
Providing deputies' staffs with training on the functioning of the Open Legislation Portal, good practices in participatory processes and the potential impact of gathering input from all around the country.	April 2021	October 2021

Deliverable: List of trained individuals.

Creating a workspace within the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress to analyze the recommendations submitted in the public meetings or forums and assess the creation and/or institutionalization of concrete tools for citizen participation.	November 2021	July 2022
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Deliverables:

- **Proof of the celebration of at least two working meetings with the Committee (including at least a summary of the discussion, a video and the list of participants).**
- **A document describing concrete actions and stages based on the legislative agreements to move forward towards better and greater citizen participation in the legislative process.**

Conducting two campaigns to raise citizen awareness on the use of the Open Legislation Portal and the different existing mechanisms of citizen participation in parliamentary debate.	April 2021	June 2021
	March 2022	May 2022

Deliverable: Communication pieces published on the website and social networks of the House.

**ACTIVITY AND
DELIVERABLE**

**START
DATE**

**END
DATE**

Holding a federal meeting with provincial legislatures to promote the use of different mechanisms of citizen participation in the parliamentary debates of each jurisdiction.

March 2022

July 2022

Deliverable: Federal meeting with the participation of experts, legislators, technical teams, House employees and citizens.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Position:

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Other participants involved:

State participants

- Internal Communication Office, Argentine House of Deputies.
 - Committees Board, Argentine House of Deputies,
 - Transparency and Access to Public Information Office, Argentine House of Deputies.
-

Civil society organizations, private sector, multi-stakeholder organizations, work teams.

- Poder Ciudadano.
 - Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina (OKFNAR).
 - Democracia en Red organization.
 - Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC).
 - Directorio Legislativo foundation.
 - Educar 2050 civil association.
 - Acción Colectiva.
 - National University of Córdoba.
 - National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET).
 - National Technological University (Rosario).
 - Datos Concepción.
 - Asuntos del Sur.
 - Argentine Equality Board.
 - Academy for supervisors of elections.
 - Civil Association for Equality and Justice (ACIJ).
-

COMMITMENT N° 4

ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION ON PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES



COMMITMENT N° 4

ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION ON PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

1 March 2021 – 31 August 2022

Implementing areas:

- Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board.
 - Committees Board.
-

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION

What is the problem that the commitment will address?

There are 46 standing committees in the Argentine House of Deputies. These committees form the core of the process of discussion on bills and create a series of files that account for their work and for the decisions made within them.

Currently, there is a vast amount of information published on the House's website and in the section of each specific committee, such as the list of its members, their duties, meeting agenda, stenographic records, summonses and minutes. However, there is also a lack of uniformity in the way information is uploaded and, in some cases, it is difficult to find historical information on their work and functioning. Even though the virtual modality in which work had to be carried out during most of 2020 favored greater transparency in meetings, including members present, the voting of rulings and the participation of individuals and institutions who made presentations— they are all published in the House YouTube channel—, there is still more effort to be done.

In many cases, this is due to the lack of tools or platforms, which are currently being developed, or to the impossibility of having the information or work schemes in formats that enable their publication.

The lack of complete, interoperable and appropriate information on the work of committees results in little knowledge on how legislative files and bills are handled in the parliamentary process. The Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC) and the Directorio Legislativo foundation have produced two documents warning about this issue and outlined a series of proposals and concrete recommendations to improve parliamentary debate monitoring, including the updated publication of documents (opinion documents, rulings, orders of business, etc.), transparency of advisers' meetings and further information on participants and quorum in committee meetings.

What is the commitment?

To increase transparency and improve accessibility to the working papers of

³Ver el de Directorio Legislativo aquí: <https://alertas.directoriolegislativo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/congreso-abierto-v5.pdf?x32394> y el de CIPPEC aquí: <https://www.cippec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/200-DPP-IP-Modernizar-el-congreso-Propuestas-para-el-relamento-de-la-C%C3%A1mara-de-Diputados-Bonvecchi-Cherny-Cella-marzo-2018.pdf>

standing committees of the House so that the parliamentary process can be monitored more effectively.

How will the commitment contribute to solve the problem?

To have documents available in open formats, while increasing the kind and quality of published information, will directly improve the quality and increase the amount of knowledge on the legislative debate, what our representatives do, who participates in the debates, which disagreements arise and which consensuses are reached.

Why is the commitment relevant in relation to the OGP values?

This commitment is directly related to an increase of legislative **transparency** as it will enable the publication of a larger number of documents on the work carried out by standing committees of the House, participants, bills under discussion, guests, among others.

In addition, it will promote **accountability** by enabling a more detailed follow-up of the law-making process and the work carried out by our representatives.

Additional information

In accordance with what was discussed in the co-creation meeting, it has been decided to include specific indicators to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made as to planned activities and the scope of established goals. Thus, this commitment will include the following indicators:

- All administrative secretaries of standing committees of the House are trained according to the changes and new proposals made.
 - At least 50% of standing committees have implemented the changes made and submit the information in open formats.
 - At least 4 new datasets are published or updated on the Open Data Portal according to the diagnosis given.
-

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Creating a workspace (including at least 4 meetings) co-organized by the Committees Board and concerned organizations and individuals to assess which information in addition to what is currently published is required by external users, what possibilities are available and which measures are needed to continue the measures or activities carried out during the Social, Preventive and Mandatory Distancing (live broadcast of sittings and meetings, daily information uploading, etc.).</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of meetings—videos, photographs and minutes, including dates, agenda, participants, summary of the topics discussed and the agreements reached.</p>	April 2021	July 2021
<p>Publishing a work plan with a schedule of activities, information improvements on committees, formats, dates and milestones based on the work jointly carried out in the previous stage.</p> <p>Deliverable: Work plan and assessment published on the House’s website.</p>	August 2021	September 2021
<p>Improving the publication of information on the committees’ work on the website by setting common publication standards and applying the knowledge jointly acquired in the previous activity according to the technical possibilities of the House. As far as possible, information will be available in open formats.</p> <p>Deliverable: Information published in the committees’ section on the House’s website and the open data portal.</p>	September 2021	July 2022

**ACTIVITY AND
DELIVERABLE**

**START
DATE**

**END
DATE**

Training the work teams and staff of the different committees who will publish the information on the relevant processes, formats and technical issues, applying the changes introduced.

September 2021

July 2022

Deliverable: Report including the amount of people trained in each area or committee.

Conducting a survey on the users of legislative information to evaluate their level of satisfaction with the changes introduced, receive improvement proposals and identify the actions to be performed in the future.

June 2022

July 2022

Deliverable: Summary of the information received and published on the House's website.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Other participants involved:

State participants

- Transparency and Access to Public Information Office, Argentine House of Deputies.

Civil society organizations, private sector, multi-stakeholder organizations, work teams.

- Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC).
- Directorio Legislativo foundation.
- Democracia en Red organization.
- Civil Association for Equality and Justice (ACIJ).
- Academy for supervisors of elections.
- National Technological University (Rosario).
- Open Knowledge Foundation Argentina (OKFNAR).
- Equality General Board.
- National Democratic Institute.

COMMITMENT N° 5

VIRTUAL OPEN AGENDA



COMMITMENT N° 5

VIRTUAL OPEN AGENDA

1 March 2021 – 31 August 2022

Implementing areas:

- Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening Board.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION

What is the problem that the commitment will address?

The Congress, the central institution of public deliberation and passing of laws, is a place where a large number of social, political and economic actors usually try to influence the decision-making process. Thus, representatives of the private sector and entrepreneurial chambers, civil society organizations, social groups, unions, academic institutions, international organizations and the different branches of the State, decentralized bodies and public companies attempt to have an impact on the parliamentary process to promote the adoption, rejection or amendment of bills under debate.

This is why, to foster accountability and transparency in the policy-formulation process, while preventing the various external influences from favoring private or individual interests at the expense of public interest, the interaction between deputies and external stakeholders must be open to public control.

Even though Argentina does not have a lobbying or conflict of interests' regulation, in 2003, the Argentine Executive Branch adopted Decree 1172/03, in which, among other things, established the creation of the Public Record of Interest Management Meetings. All the meetings held between public officials and private stakeholders willing to influence the decision-making process are to be registered in this record. As a decree, it only affects the Executive Branch; currently, the House has no similar record and neither deputies nor high-rank authorities have the obligation to publish their agendas nor the list of meetings they hold with different social actors. However, some of them do it on their own account.

This creates inequality of opportunities to influence public decisions, especially harmful for leaders and organizations with fewer resources, which can even bias legislators' views on issues (as they are reached only by the most influential and powerful sectors or actors) and, consequently, increase public distrust, caused by the lack of information on those who influence our representatives.

What is the commitment?

To draw up a Virtual Open Agenda that enables the publication of the meetings held by deputies and political authorities of the House with leaders belonging to civil society (organized or unorganized), private or academic sectors, public companies, decentralized bodies or representatives of other State branches.

How will the commitment contribute to solve the problem?

By having a platform where transparency and accountability is given to interest management meetings held with deputies and political authorities of the House, progress will be made towards providing equal opportunities to participate and have an impact on the parliamentary process by promoting the involvement of all interested parties in the lawmaking process on every topic.

In addition, reporting the sectors, industries, etc. with whom the representatives of the House have decided to meet contributes to the identification of possible conflicts of interest and their prevention.

Why is the commitment relevant in relation to the OGP values?

This commitment is directly related to the value of **transparency** as it will promote the openness of information on the activities carried out by deputies and high-rank authorities of the House, especially on their agendas and meetings. This will provide more transparency to the decision-making process.

After being implemented, greater and better **citizen participation** is expected to be encouraged by providing more information on the work done by legislators and House authorities, and **accountability** is expected to improve. Making information available to the public on meetings where interests influencing the law-making process are negotiated—including participants, schedules and topics—favors accountability of parliamentary representatives and high-rank authorities of the House.

Additional information

In accordance with what was discussed in the co-creation meeting, it has been decided to include specific indicators to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made as to planned activities and the scope of established goals. Thus, this commitment will include the following indicators:

- 200 people from at least 150 deputies' staffs are trained for using the system and

COMMITMENT Nº 5 - VIRTUAL OPEN AGENDA

uploading information regarding the deputy with whom they work.

- The system is fully operational and at least 20% of deputies use it.

- The presidential decree that institutionalizes the Virtual Open Agenda is signed by the Speaker of the House and published on the website.



ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Developing a system through which legislators and authorities will be able to upload their agendas and meetings with external actors.</p> <p>Deliverable: Virtual system with clear information easily available on the House's website and Intranet.</p>	March 2021	October 2021
<p>Holding at least two meetings with experts, relevant organizations, legislators and House employees, in which preliminary progress is shown and agreement is reached on other fields to be included in the system.</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of the meetings held (such as minutes, videos, photos, agenda, etc.).</p>	March 2021	October 2021
<p>Training authorities and workers of the House so that they can use the system and learn conceptual and theoretical content on public ethics.</p> <p>Deliverable: Proof of training courses offered (material used, photos, videos).</p>	August 2021	June 2022
<p>Writing a Parliamentary Ethics Handbook within the Argentine House of Deputies, taking into consideration the contributions and recommendations provided by external actors.</p> <p>Deliverable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parliamentary Ethics Handbook published on the House's website. - Proof of having held at least two meetings with specialists and civil society organizations to define its structure and receive content contributions. 	March 2021	February 2022

ACTIVITY AND DELIVERABLE	START DATE	END DATE
<p>Holding a work meeting to introduce the Parliamentary Ethics Handbook to the deputies, its content, concepts and best practices so that they can be put into practice both individually and collectively.</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>May 2022</p>
<p>Holding a public event (with the participation of legislators) to discuss the possibility of issuing lobbying regulations and promote the Parliamentary Ethics Handbook within the Legislative Branch.</p>	<p>February 2022</p>	<p>April 2022</p>
<p>Deliverable: Proof of the public meeting celebrated with the participation of legislators and experts on parliamentary ethics.</p>		
<p>Institutionalizing the Virtual Open Agenda within the House, stating the fields to be included and the intended users, and to impose the obligation of publishing the information in open formats so that it can be consulted and used by citizens.</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>July 2022</p>
<p>Deliverable: Presidential decree institutionalizing the system.</p>		

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Other participants involved:

State participants

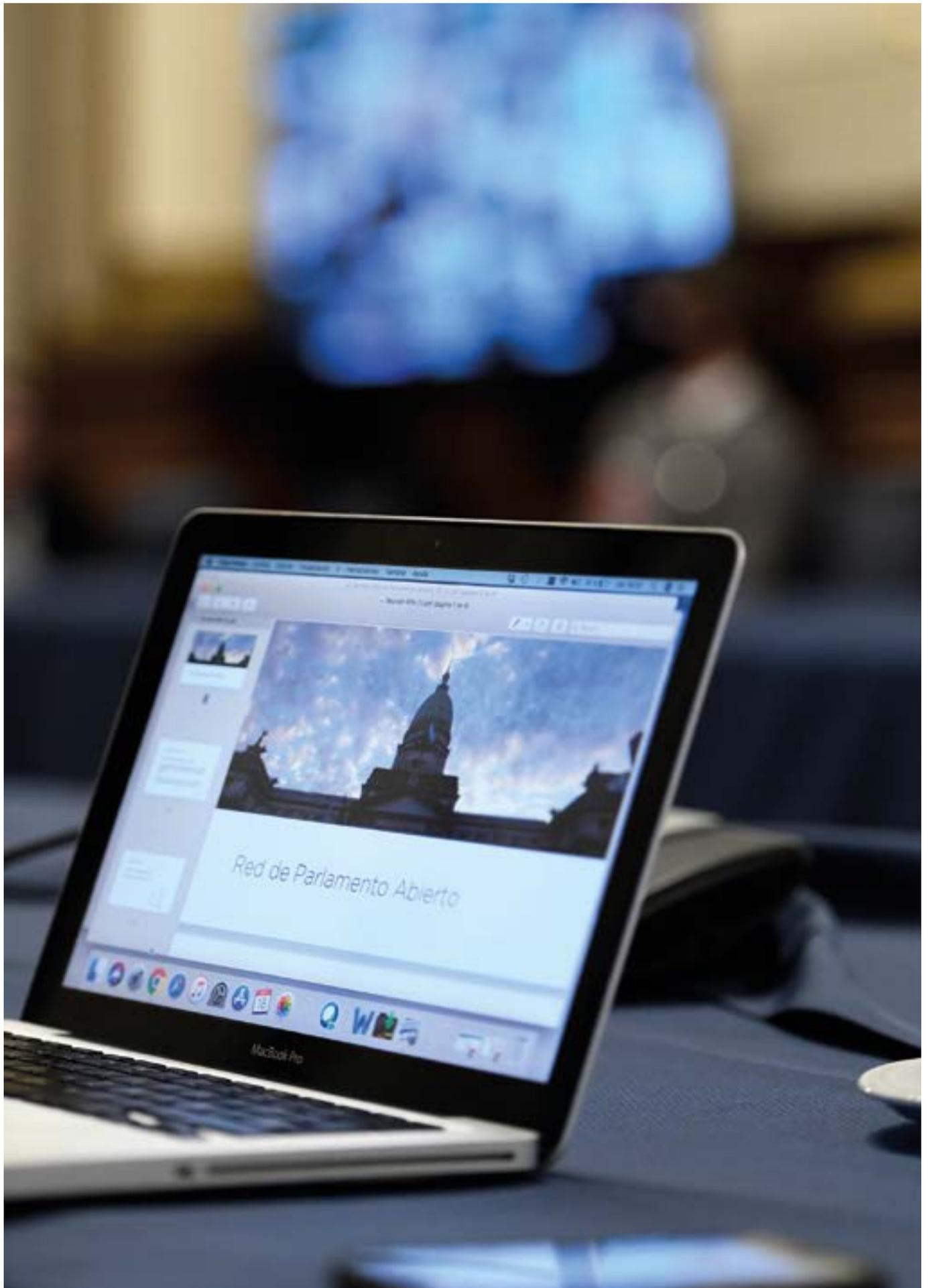
- IT Systems General Board, Argentine House of Deputies.
 - Transparency and Access to Public Information Office, Argentine House of Deputies.
 - Argentine deputies.
 - Institute of Parliamentary Training (ICAP).
-

Civil society organizations, private sector, multi-stakeholder organizations, work teams.

- Directorio Legislativo foundation.
 - Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC).
 - Civil Association for Equality and Justice (ACIJ)
 - Poder Ciudadano.
 - Democracia en Red organization.
 - National Technological University.
 - National Democratic Institute.
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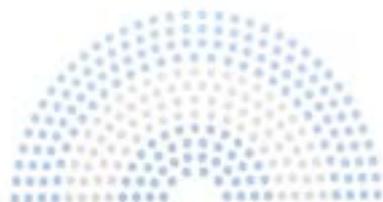
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CO-CREATION PROCESS











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